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UNITARIAN

A MAGAZINE FOR FREE CHRISTIANS

KNUTSFORD CELEBRATIONS

From September 24th to October st, Knutsford worthily commemorated the 150th Birth Anniversary September 29th, 1810) of Mrs. Gaskell, a tremendous project involving much planning and organiation with valuable assistance from nterested townsfolk and well-noted y the Press and the B.B.C. Mrs. Gaskell came to Knutsford as a oung child bereaved of her mother, remaining until she was 15 years old, was a member of Brook Street Chapel along with others of the large Holland family—all Unitarians —and taught in its Sunday School. She now lies, with her husband and two daughters, in the chapel graveyard, the grave and the chapel being places of pilgrimage for a constant stream of visitors each year and during the past few weeks in particular. As the author of "Cranford," which depicts early 19th century life and manners in Knutsford, she

placed the town "on the map," though her fame rests on other novels by her. The first event of the commemoration was the opening of the Gaskell Exhibition in the Brook Street Chapel schoolroom by Mrs. M. Trevor Jones, the great-granddaughter of Mrs. Gaskell, at which could be seen First Editions and original M.S.S. of Mrs. Gaskell's works, autographed letters, personal relics of both Mrs. and the Rev. William Gaskell, period furniture and costumes, etc., and even a room complete with period pieces. A constant stream of visitors from far and near, highly appreciative of what they saw, passed through the exhibition, visited the chapel and were, if need be, provided with light refreshments by the ladies of the congregation.

On the Sunday evening, the 25th, a Commemorative Service was held in the chapel conducted by the Rev. Albert Smith, which attracted a large congregation. The address, "Elegance and Earnestness — a Study of Mrs. Gaskell's Novels," was given by Mr. Arthur Pollard, B.A., B.Litt., lecturer in English Literature at Manchester University, and both the simple service and the address were deeply appreciated. A lovely gesture from the congregation of Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, was the placing in Brook Street Chapel of a beautiful sheath of chrysanthemums suitably inscribed in grateful memory of the Rev. William and Elizabeth Gaskell, since when wreaths have been laid on their grave by Mrs. M. Trevor Jones and, in the name of Knutsford townsfolk, by the Chairman of the Urban District Council.

Not only was the Gaskell Memorial Tower in King Street floodlit throughout the period but also Brook Street Chapel as well, which is now a permanent feature made possible by the interest and generosity of members and friends of the chapel. One local newspaper commented, "The quaint and beautiful Unitarian Chapel becomes an enchanting picture under the soft yellow glow of floodlights." Can it be claimed that this is the first Unitarian Chapel to be so treated?

On the actual birthday of Mrs. Gaskell, a commemorative plaque on the Gaskell Memorial Tower was unveiled with an inscription relevant to the erection of the tower and the 150th Birth Anniversary. Additionally, an adaptation and production of Mrs. Gaskell's short story, "Lois the Witch," as a play by an enthusiastic and capable Knutsford lady pleased good audiences during the week at the local Little Theatre. Among the cast being Mr. R. W. Austen, the Chapel Treasurer, and Misses B. Austen and B. Horrocks, scholars in the Sunday School. After all expenses have been met it is hoped to institute a permanent Gaskell Literature Prize to be competed for annually by the school children of Knutsford. In all, the commemoration activities and particularly the exhibition have been an unqualified success, a new interest in Mrs. Gaskell and her works has been aroused in and beyond Knutsford, whilst her Unitarian background and loyalty, together with her close associations with Brook Street Chapel, Knutsford, and Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, have been emphasised once again.

CROSS STREET REMEMBERS

On Sunday, September 25th, a Memorial Service was held in Cross Street Chapel, Manchester, to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of the birth of Mrs. Elizabeth Gaskell, novelist and wife of the Rev. William Gaskell, a former minister of Cross Street Chapel for 56 years.

After the service and cups of tea, the congregation stayed to hear readings from the works of Mrs. Gaskell and extracts from her correspondence presented by the ladies of the chapel in the new chapel building, with a commentary by the

ev. Charles H. Bartlett, minister of
oss Street.

On the Saturday, a party of mem-
rs together with Mr. and Mrs.
artlett and family had visited the
hibition of original manuscripts
id other interesting items con-
ected with the life of Mrs. Gaskell,
eld in the schoolrooms of Brook
reet Unitarian Church, Knuts-
rd, and placed flowers in memory
her.

S I SEE IT

By H.J.

Probably the most recurrent
neme in our churches is the appeal
or money to balance the budget
id it would seem that we have not
et been persuaded to contribute a
xed percentage of our income as a
irect subscription as an alternative
" bring and buy " sales, " jumble
ales," coffee mornings, etc.

Although the Bible suggests a 10
er cent. tithe I feel that the great
ajority of our members would con-
der this too great a proportion. It
ay be sufficient if everyone made a
enuine promise to give a direct sub-
cription of one and a quarter per
ent. which represents threepence
the pound of their income. This
ncludes all teenagers whose wages
re proportionately much higher to-
ay.

But a promise is idle unless it is
ulfilled to the letter and yet it is
urprising how many people fall
own on their promise. I have for
long time adopted the method of
utting my subscription away in an
nvelope on the day on which I re-
eive my salary and this ensures
hat I shall not be looking for
hange on Sunday, but more im-
portant that I shall not get behind
with my subscription. Another
point. As we are blessed from time
o time with increases in our wages
or salaries we should automatically
ncrease our subscription to the
Church.

HAVING, DOING, AND BEING

By Bruce Findlow

The thought comes from Dr. Martineau: " Some men are eminent for what they possess, some for what they achieve, others for what they are. Having, doing and being, constitute the three great distinctions of mankind . . . " He goes on to say that all of us have something of each, what matters is which is most prominent in us—having, doing or being.

The church with a large percentage of people whose lives are dominated by the thought of having things or money cannot hope to do much as a religious institution, a centre of wisdom and light and love; because religion is not on the side of having. Of course we may work for the necessities and even some of the luxuries of life but if we make this our chief activity and our chief joy we are going against the wisdom and light and love of religion and literally wasting our time.

Religion calls us to be doers rather than havers. To live out our lives not that we may have but that we may do. And not just do anything; and not just do anything for the money: but instead do good, do something for others or for the sake of the neigbourhood or the city or the country; do something good for nothing, not counting the cost. There is a lot of this kind of doing in our world and we must be glad of it for it produces reforms and comfort and healing as well as bringing legitimate purpose and satisfaction to the doers themselves. If we call ourselves religious or Christian or Unitarian we are saying that doing matters more to us than having.

But the really top people are known for what they are. " To be good," wrote Martineau, " is divine." Not becoming good or better or best but just being good, being true to yourself as, say, Jesus was true to himself, to his divine self.

CHILDREN'S CORNER

Knights of the Back Garden

"'Uther Pendragon is dead!'

The cry rang down the hall. The crowd of knights and noblemen became silent and tense then began muttering uneasily . . ."

Hello, everyone, this is Raymond. What d'you think of that for a start? We were rehearsing a little play I'd written for the school concert. I say "were" because we shan't be doing it now. Somehow things didn't work out.

Anyway, to get back—the cry actually rang down the back garden which was supposed to be the hall; and the crowd were Alf, Sam and Lisbeth, who at that point was playing Sir-Somebody-or-other from Somewhere. They **were** silent, but not for long and the uneasy muttering was real enough: it was a November afternoon and the wind was cold—so **they** said. I asked them if it would be any different in the hall of a draughtly old castle. They couldn't say.

Alf took over the part of King Arthur and made a great to-do about the sword-in-the-stone bit. We'd jammed it under the shed; and he heaved and groaned and flung himself backwards—and kicked a bucket right over the cabbages into the potato patch!

I was playing Sir Raymond du Lac. They told me the name was Lancelot but I didn't fancy it. Raymond seemed to fit in much better. Anyway, I'd written the thing and I should know, shouldn't I?

It was when we got to the death scene that things went wrong.

Alf lay in the middle of the garden, ready to throw Excalibur into the lake (we weren't bothering about the arm coming up out of the water—a bit too tricky). He tried several times and each time threw it about two feet! In the end I said **I'd** show him how it should be done. So I lay down, spoke the line, groaned, heaved myself around painfully, and threw the sword with all my might.

"There!" I said, "that's what I mean."

There was a crash, a shattering of glass, and Mr. Edwards next door came dashing out to look at his greenhouse. A little later he was talking to Dad, who a little later still was talking to me.

As I said, we shan't be doing it at the school concert after all.

UNITARIANS IN THE NEWS

The Rev. T. E. Nuttall has made strong public criticism of the fact that to be sure of obtaining entrance to one of Oldham's schools it is necessary to attend an Anglican Sunday School. Six scholars recently left Oldham Unitarian Sunday School and joined Anglican schools in order to qualify for admission to the secondary modern school. The local "Chronicle" quoted Mr. Nuttall as saying: "This is entirely wrong; it is striking at the very basis of freedom. I am strongly opposed to anything of this description which appears to be an effort to build up the numerical strength of a Sunday School on an entirely wrong basis."

The Rev. Alec Finbow, of Doncaster, is a Vice-President of the Internation Esperanto Congress to be held at Harrogate in 1961.

At Kidderminster, Mr. George Brimfield recently celebrated his 93rd birthday, and another nonagenarian in the congregation, Mrs. Bell, sister of the late Rev. G. A. Payne, of Knutsford, is "still going strong." Mr. Frank Wellstead, of Poole, was 95 in August.

THE INQUIRER

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ITARIAN STALWARTS

HELEN WATTS

hen it was suggested that a t biography of Helen Watts uld appear in this series, her racteristic reaction was: "Why I am not a stalwart Unitarian." walwart physically, no. Stalwart itually, yes!

elen Kirkpatrick Watts was born Sunderland in 1881, the eldest of nine children of the Rev. A. H. tts, who was later to become in cession Vicar of Bordesley, near mingham; Dartford, in Kent; ton, near Nottingham; and Holy nity, Brighton. Among her estors were John Hunter, the ntist, and the Rev. Thomas nter, Secretary of Dr. William's ist. But she is most proud of her nily's traditional link with Dr. ac Watts, the author of many mns, including "O God, our help ages past."

Brought up as she was in the Church of England, where she was not to hear the word "Unitarian" until she was sixteen, it was not until 1903 that, after much heart-searching, she herself joined the Unitarian Church. Those who have read her little book "By A Way I Knew Not" will remember the steps by which she reached that momentous decision, battling as she had to against all the forces of orthodoxy ranged against her.

A few years later, round about the year 1908, Helen Watts was to find herself once again doing battle, but this time against a different but equally formidable foe—the British Government. It was during this fight for Women's Suffrage that she found herself confined for a month in Holloway Gaol.

In addition to the booklet already mentioned she has written "The Legend of the Christmas Rose" and "Uninvited Guests" (both published by the Linsey Press), "The Nevilles" (a Sunday School story) and a book of poems—written in collaboration with one of her brothers, who was for many years Senior Classics Master at Downside.

At the beginning of this year Helen Watts retired from the secretaryship of the Old Meeting House, Ditchling, after 20 years of service. Previously she had served as Secretary at Richmond Unitarian Church for 10 years, and before that for a similar period at Essex Church. During that time she has also been an active lay preacher (since 1928) and Sunday School teacher.

In spite of her busy public life, she has found time to be a devoted daughter and sister to her family and a constant help to her many friends, who have learned to value her quiet humour, her indomitable courage and her warm-hearted generosity. No-one who comes into contact with her can fail to be impressed by the eternal youthfulness of her spirit.

"I don't mind them ploughing the fields, but I wish they wouldn't scatter so much."

THE U.Y.P.L. MEETS THE G.A.

By Anne Hewerdine

A very enjoyable week-end was spent when members of the U.Y.P.L. visited the G.A. at Essex Hall, the Unitarian Headquarters in London. We were entertained at Essex Hall by the Rev. Dudley Richards on Friday, September 23rd. The following day the Rev. John Kielty gave a talk on the G.A., after which there was a discussion. The number of ministers compared with the number of churches was considered and the question was asked "Why don't more people go into the ministry?" Mr. B. D. Needham and Mr. P. Short replied with the reason that a high standard is set and that after a long period of training the ultimate remuneration is inadequate.

The Rev. Graham Short gave us some idea of how the G.A. gives publicity to our religion. It was questioned whether our faith should be advertised as being modern and a faith of the future or a faith with an old tradition behind it. The answer was brief. Unitarianism should be known as a religion of the past, present and future. The idea of displaying publicity on local transport was introduced with the suggestion of better advertisement material in the Press. It was suggested that perhaps the public would respond better to articles about Unitarian churches or important people in Unitarianism. It was questioned as to whether advertising was really worthwhile, and whether the money that was being spent could be used to better purpose.

The Rev. Dudley Richards discussed with us the R.E.Y.D. and pointed out that more Sunday School teachers of the right kind were needed.

A very enjoyable social was held in the evening and the week-end was rounded off on the Sunday morning when the U.Y.P.L. attended Essex Church and a service conducted by the Rev. Graham Short.

Front page photograph by courtesy of "The Guardian," Manchester, September 27th, 1960.

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WS AND VIEWS

HOME CHURCHES

On the list presented to the nistry Committee at its meeting October 5th, there appeared the mes of twenty vacant pulpits, int or group ministries counting one pulpit) and the names of only ee ministers seeking a settlement. For the first time, the amount ceived in subscriptions to the .R.F. from members in the itish Isles exceeded £100 in 1960. nformation about the 1961 meet-gs of I.A.R.F. in Davos, Switzer-nd, is expected to be circulated to urches at the end of November. e date of the conference is gust 8th —13th, to be followed by htseeing tours, etc.

The Rev. James Luther Adams, of icago, well-known for his work th the I.A.R.F. has received an norary degree from the University Marburg.

An extract from the "Scottish ily Express," Monday, September h—"Playwright Bernard Kops— describes himself as a Dutch-panish-Jewish agnostic — read ssages from the book of Job in a nitarian Church yesterday.

And the small fervent Mr. Kops xplained later: "I was very pleased take part. The Unitarians believe at all religions have the same kind basis— and the Book of Job is a ry beautiful poem."

Kops, an energetic 33-year-old, as the third festival visitor to take art in Bible reading at St. Mark's nitarian Church in Castle Terrace, DINBURGH."

At previous services, American tor Glen Mazen read poetry of Valt Whitman, and Indian Muni al read from the Hindu Scriptures.

Attendances at the three Festival ervices—all on wet Sundays— veraged nearly one hundred each unday, including many visitors. he exhibition of paintings by nembers and friends of the Church as seen by about 500 people on weekdays.

The U.Y.P.L. World Refugee Year Appeal has been brought to a close with a total of over £1,050. The target was £300.

At a family service at PADIHAM earlier in the year the organ was played by fourteen-year-old Anne Helsby. The service consisted of reading from the writings of the Rev. Magnus Ratter addressed to School Girl, Happy Mother, Young Lady and Older People.

The retiring offertory at the Flower Service at KILLINCHY realised £19 for the India Fund. The Church was redecorated in September.

THE LINDSEY PRESS

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by S. P. WHITEHOUSE, M.A., B.Litt.

Essex Hall Lecture, 1960

2s., by post 2s. 4d.

The Lindsey Press,
Essex Hall,
1/6, Essex Street, Strand,
London W.C.2.

The Principal, the Rev. Kenworthy, addressed the Unitarian College Opening Proceedings on "The Men, the Means and the Ministry."

The Autumn meeting of the South East Wales Unitarian Society was held at PONTYPRIDD on Saturday, October 15. The Rev. John Quirk, minister of Gloucester and Cheltenham Churches spoke on "The Place of the Church To-day." At the service in the evening Mr. Quirk preached on "What is Your Life?"

Intermediate and senior classes of STAND Sunday School visited Whitefield Synagogue on Sunday, October 9th.

Instead of the sermon the Rev. Donald Mills presented a film strip of the life of Miss Margaret McMillan at the morning service at DOB LANE Chapel, Manchester, on October 3rd.

In order to meet the expenses of renovation, MOSSLEY is asking one hundred members to give one shilling each week for twelve months—the income will be £260.

A new club has joined the half dozen already functioning at LEEDS. It is the Young Wives' Club.

The congregations of NEWCHURCH and RAWTENSTALL have decided to link. The Rev. John Mather, for two years minister of Newchurch, will now become minister of both churches.

The Rev. R. G. Kimbal began his ministry at STOCKPORT on the first Sunday in October. Mr. Kimball is an American who plans to spend about two years in this country.

£14,000 IN BEQUESTS

Mr. John Buckley, of Brooklands Road, Brooklands, Manchester building and cinematograph proprietor, and chairman of John Buckley Theatres, left £138,952 gross (duty paid £60,301). After various minor bequests, the following institutions benefited:

Pendleton Unitarian Free Church (£2,500), Cross Street Chapel (£2,500), Unitarian College, Manchester (£1,000), Y.M.C.A. for work in Manchester (£1,000), Manchester College, Oxford (£1,000), and £1,000 each to Dr. Barnardo's Homes, N.S.P.C.C., the Bank Clerks' Orphanage, the Variety Artistes Benevolent Fund and Institution. St. Dunstans and the R.S.P.C.A.

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